

PAIN RELIEF

Manual Therapy Can Help

Dr Adrian Good

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As a first year student rapidly approaching examinations, “Pain Relief- Manual Therapy Can Help” comes as a welcomed relief to prescribed texts. Dr Good has succeeded in writing a succinct introduction to the diverse range of manual therapists currently available. The main aim of the book is to improve communication between patients and practitioners through education and increased community awareness. Dr Good also aspires to educate other allied health care practitioners to the benefits of manual therapy. In this regard, “Pain Relief” is not a self-help manual containing a multitude of exercise prescriptions but focused on the assistance provided by the five largest providers of manual therapy. These include: massage, osteopathy, chiropractic, manual medicine and physiotherapy.

“Pain Relief” is a well-presented book containing a useful glossary, a resource section for further information and simple but effective diagrams. The text is structured in two related sections that are regularly interspersed with relevant examples taken from Dr Good’s own clinical practice and personal experiences. Section One addresses the fundamental ideas common to the majority of manual therapists. Questions regarding manual diagnosis and how it differs from conventional medical diagnosis, treatment approaches and rationale are all discussed. Dedicated chapters identifying some similarities and differences existing between the aforementioned therapists are also included. This area effectively answers one of the most commonly posed

questions regarding manual therapy practitioners by the books target audience.

Section Two explores of musculoskeletal disorders on a regional basis including the head, neck, upper and lower back, chest and extremities. In total, sixty common disorders are addressed with causes, symptoms and treatment approaches discussed. This section is particularly effective at providing enough clinical information without becoming too overwhelming for the layperson. The formal structure of “Pain Relief” is well devised and integrated as to guide the novice reader towards an elementary understanding of manual therapy and the common disorders effectively treated.

Dr Good takes a revisionary approach towards the role of soft tissue (muscle, ligament, joint capsule, fascia and the intervertebral disc) in the aetiology of musculoskeletal dysfunction. Dr Good strongly asserts the role of soft tissue as the source of symptoms and the recipients of treatment. The traditionally held belief, common to many therapy circles, of misaligned bones and subsequently interrupted nerve supply as central mechanical dysfunction is rejected. Dr Good proposes that bones themselves are not treated during manual therapy, but are instead purely used as levers during treatment to direct therapeutic forces towards the associated soft tissues.

Dr Good’s balanced approach to manual therapy and effective

distillation of a complex area gives "Pain Relief" a wide reading audience. The book would be recommended reading for motivated manual therapy patients wishing a deeper understanding of their condition. Allied health practitioners - including naturopaths, podiatrists, occupational therapists and nurses - would all benefit by the information contained within this book. Additionally, first year students engaged

in any discipline of complementary medicine will also find this book interesting and stimulating. Admirably, there are few sections of the publication that could prove contentious to members of the professions discussed. In this regard, "Pain Relief" has successfully achieved its goal of strengthening the manual therapy profession as a whole.

Ryka Moore
